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STATE FOR INL AND EUR/SCE PFEUFFER, DOJ FOR DRUG
ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [MK](#) [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#)

SUBJECT: MACEDONIA: HEROIN SEIZURE MAY PROVIDE LEADS TO
REGIONAL DRUG RING

REF: 2007 SKOPJE 21

SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) Macedonian police arrested a Macedonian citizen and seized 23.6 kilos of heroin during a traffic stop on the Skopje-Tetovo highway on 15 January. The seizure stemmed from a September 2007 investigation into an organized drug-trafficking operation running drugs from Turkey through Bulgaria and Macedonia to Albania, with the final destination in the Western European market. Macedonian police are hoping the arrest will provide them with important leads on the operations of the regional drug-trafficking ring. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Acting on information provided to both Macedonian and Bulgarian police that a narcotics transfer was to occur between January 13 and 16 in Macedonia, local police arrested a Macedonian national driving on the Skopje-Tetovo highway on January 15 and seized 23.6 kilos of heroin he was transporting in his vehicle. According to MOI sources, the high-quality heroin was concealed in 40 wax-sealed parcels. The arrestee indicated to the police that he was directed to transport the heroin to Albania, for which he would be paid 800 Euros. He is being held in a prison in Tetovo, where he is awaiting trial.

¶3. (SBU) The seizure was part of an investigation begun in September 2007 by the Macedonian Anti-Drug-Trafficking Sector of the MOI's Organized Crime Department. Macedonian police are coordinating with the Bulgarian police attach in Skopje to trace the heroin deal to a ring suspected of operating out of Turkey to transport narcotics through Bulgaria and Macedonia into Albania. (Note: Several of the arresting officers are recent graduates of the USG-funded International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest, highlighting the importance of continued USG law enforcement training provided to the GoM. End Note.)

¶4. (SBU) Comment: Police sources indicated that the arrestee provided information on his route and compensation, and are hoping the arrest and seizure will lead to a key break in the

regional drug ring that has been under investigation since September 2007. Building on Macedonia's success in intercepting a shipment of nearly 500 kilos of cocaine through Macedonia to Greece last year (reftel), this operation further underscores the value of effective regional cooperation in attacking large-scale narcotics trafficking operations. End comment.

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